

Title: dwarves and their ways

Author: Isilmea

The dwarves are a sturdy race; short, between four to five feet tall. The most distinguishing feature is the prized beard of a dwarf, generally three feet long, but stretching as far as twenty in the oldest of their kind, the length of it tucked into their armour and cloaks.

The dwarves innately are opposed to magical forces, unable to use them by nature and fearful of its power. In runecrafting their mystics practice, enchanting their already fearfully strong weapons and armour. The runesmiths, or Rhuns as they are called, also act as the Priests and Clerics of the dwarves; The Council of Dumathoin being the highest authority on divine law. They are naturally resistant to poison and many forms of magic, and have a unique strength to other illnesses and extremities in terms of temperature. They do, however, prefer their dimly lit caverns and halls, and mild warmth.

They are first in foremost in craft. Of all races, dead and living, immortal and mortal, their ability to craft weapons and armour is unmatched. Iron, gold, and silver are their servants, and

through them they have made suits of armour for elven lords and human kings, stronger than stone, and light as a bedsheet. Mithril, of all their metals, is their most prized -- mined in the deepest reaches of Britannia, and called valorite by humans and other races, they can smelt and forge an armour strong enough to deflect any attack. A gift of mithril from a dwarf, no matter how small, is considered to be the most thoughtful gift a dwarf can give, and a sign of great respect.

Second in a dwarf's mind, behind gold, jewels and formity, comes ale. The breweries of Bryn Baraz are constantly supplying the city with kegs of ale alcoholic enough to make an orc's stomach turn uneasily at the smell of it, and disgust most elves and humans. After a hard day's work of mining, however, nothing beats a tall, cold, surly Stoneheim Old.

Orcs are the most dire enemies of the dwarves, their hatred going far beyond even the first golden age. No dwarf recalls and no tome encravals what occurred between the two races, but it is a hatred that will never end.

The dwarven language, Kalazalid, is a secret tongue no dwarf rightly utters outside of the presence of his own kind. Very few surfacers or inhabitants of the Underdark have heard it firsthand, or know its laws and properties.

Also secret are dwarven names. The names dwarves use upon the surface often are nicknames or shortened versions of their true names, and a dwarf's true name is even more secret than their language. To know a man's name is to hold a great power over him is the dwarven belief. The surnames dwarves use are often given by accomplishments, or taken from their forefathers.

On their religion:

Dwarves worship four deities, chiefly, aside from their ancestors. To ancient dwarves many younger ones pray to for advice or wisdom, and they have a great respect towards their ancestors, no matter how petty. Many dwarves also believe they are all descended from one of their four deities:

Dumathoin: The Keeper of Secrets, and the chief dwarven god. He carved them from the stone of the earth, their legends say, and created the dwarves with the aid of Grungi the Smith. Most rituals are held to Dumathoin, and the Council of Rhunics is rightfully named after him -- though the Keeper of Secrets rarely reveals his knowledge and wisdom to his children, perhaps for their benefit.

Grungi the Smith: The god of forgery and mining, who according to legend took the carven figured of stone and put

them on his forge, and sparked life in them. He then taught the dwarves to mine, smelt, and craft all ores; many temples are constructed to him, that smiths would pray to him for perfection in their wares.

Grimnir the Fearless: The warrior deity, he showed the dwarves how to use their axes and hammers, and defended the first dwarven fortress of Gharan-az-Durathin from the also young race of orcs. All warriors are blessed by rhunics in a prayer to Grimnir, before battle.

Valaya the Protector: The only dwarven goddess, she represents unity and protection. She is believed to've built Gharan-az-Durathin, and taught the young stonelords how to build fortresses and walls impenetrable.
On the dwarven people:

After the Fall of Bazadun, the clans scattered, and adapted to their new surroundings. Several new races of dwarves were born during this time, which are detailed herein.

Mountain dwarves: The average dwarf, bearing dark skin and dark hair. They're slightly shorter than their hill kindred, having adapted to dwell in the low mines and halls under the earth. Of arms, they prefer maces and blunt weapons.
Hill dwarves: Fairer in skin and hair than the mountain dwarf, these dwarves live in the vast

plains, in equally impressive cities. Blond hair is common among them, and they prefer crossbows and axes, to defend themselves while they harvest lumber in the forests.

Duergar: Deep dwarves, descended from Deep-Eye and Rockwatcher Clan. Their skin is dark grey, and their hair nearly white; they are malevolent and cruel, and despite their heritage as noble dwarves, are oftentimes slaves of the even more brooding drow race. They are equal in height to their mountain brothers, though the hair on their head is often nonexistent; and what little they have is often kept in mohawks or short ponytails.

Derro: Descendants of the thought-lost Oathkeeper, Shieldbreaker, and Flamebeard clans, the wild dwarves delved deep into the Underdark after falling prey to madness. They hunt wildly, even shaving their majestic beards, cruel and cunning despite their lack of society or law. Their skin is pale blue, and their eyes bear no pupils; their hair is often a pale blonde or gold. They wear leather, and are dark creatures; too mad to be enslaved, and too evil to be united with their kin.

Darren: The frost dwarves, descended from Clan Tidehammer; they are the only dwarves that do not fear water for the change it represents, and openly sail and fish on the waters to the north. Their skin is pale grey,

almost silver in it's tone,
and their hair ranges
from ice white to deep
blue in colour. They are
the shortest of all
dwarven kind, ranging
from three and a half to
four and a half feet, but
sturdy and strong, able
to endure long trips at
sea.

Zhirrn: The wind dwarves
are most similar to the
elves; druidic, in touch
with nature. They fell
away from their craft of
iron long ago, and wear
robes of pale green and
brown, their only weapon
staves imbued with the
power to call thunder,
called "stormrifles" by the
other dwarves. They ride
wild bears of the
mountains, and often
speak briefly and only in
riddles. Their hair is slick
and silver, with strange
curls. They are, dark.